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## FROM FIELD AND STUDY

An adult food plant of *Ethon breve* (Coleoptera: Buprestidae).—On September 23, 1979 while walking in bushland in an adjacent allotment opposite the W.A. Dept. of Agriculture, South Perth, I found, on one flower of *Patersonia occidentalis* R.Br., an individual of the jewel beetle *Ethon breve* Carter, feeding on a petal, but the insect eluded capture. 110 flowers of numerous *P. occidentalis* plants were closely examined during 1120 to 1420 hours, but only four beetles were observed on the flowers, all of which were collected. 46 flowers (42% of those examined) had feeding damage to the petals. The sexual parts (i.e. style and stamens) of 5 flowers had been eaten. Since numbers of *E. breve* appeared low at the time, it is doubtful whether all feeding damage was attributable to this beetle. I also found a grasshopper (Tettigoniidae) chewing a petal of a flower. It is possible that grasshoppers are the main insects responsible for the feeding damage observed. *Ethon* is a small genus of beetles restricted to Australia. Carter (*Proc. Linn. Soc. N.S.W.*, 48, 1923: 159-176) noted adults of *Ethon* species from around Sydney fed on *Dillwynia* and *Pultenaea* (Fabaceae). It is thus interesting to note *E. breve* feeding on a species of the Iridaceae (a monocotyledonous family).

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Further Notes on Mistletoes from the Murchison Area, W.A.—The undetermined mistletoe mentioned in my previous article (*West. Aust. Nat.*, 14, 1979: 160-161) has been identified by Mr. A. S. George (W.A. Herbarium) as *Anyema sanguineum* (F. Muell.) Dans. Barlow, (*Aust. J. Bot.*, 14, 1966: 421-499) states that this is a widespread species in northern Australia "from North West Cape to north-east Queensland in open forests and is predominantly parasitic on *Eucalyptus* spp., rarely on *Melaleuca* spp. and a few other hosts." The following Western Australian eucalypts have been recorded as hosts for *A. sanguineum* (based on collections in the W.A. Herbarium, Perth)—*Eucalyptus argillacea*, *E. camaldulensis*, *E. terminalis* and *E. tetradonta*. My collection from *E. microtheca* adds a further host record.

On April 14, 1979, *Anyema gibberuhum*\* (Tate) Dans. was collected

from *Grevillea stenobotrya* at Mt. Narryer (26°35'S, 115°55'E). Barlow (*loc. cit.*) states that this species is almost exclusively parasitic on species of *Grevillea* and *Hakea*. The type specimen was collected on *Grevillea nematophylla* in South Australia. The following Western Australian plants have been recorded as hosts (based on collections in the W.A. Herbarium, Perth)—*Acacia acuminata*, *A. aneura*, *Grevillea nematophylla*, *G. pyramidalis*, *G. striata*, *G. wickhamii*, *Hakea lorea* and *H. recurva*. My collection from *G. stenobotrya* adds another host record.

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**Cattle Egrets on Herdsman Lake.**—Cattle Egrets (*Bubulcus ibis*) are not common in southern Western Australia. So I feel it is worth recording a sighting of the species at Herdsman Lake on August 28, 1978. When driving along Pearson Street I saw a bulky-looking white egret. It was much smaller than the White Egret (*Egretta alba*) but bulkier, though possibly shorter, than a Whitefaced Heron (*Ardea novaehollandiae*). The plumage was pure white except that the face and the plumes (stretching down the back) were of bright buff. The bill was yellow with a noticeable pink flush at the base.

I was unable to return until October 6, when, after a long search, I saw eight egrets feeding in rough grass around some horses. Two of the egrets had plumes and buff colouring to the head; the others were all white with yellow bills, but had no plumes. The legs were not black, nor pale. These birds were not seen again but as two of them were in nearly full breeding plumage (similar to those I have seen in Europe) there is a possibility they may have remained around cattle elsewhere in the South-West of the State. In the vicinity, on October 6, were some White Ibis (*Threskiornis molucca*) and Straw-necked Ibis (*T. spinicollis*).

—T. G. D. SHANNON, Duncraig.

**Additional Record of the White-backed Swallow South of the Swan River.**—N. Koliichis (*West Aust. Nat.*, 14, 1979: 131) has summarized records of the White-backed Swallow (*Cheramoeca leucosternum*) on the Swan Coastal Plain. Only the most southerly of these was south of the Swan River, at Leeming. Since then, P. Curry (*West. Aust. Nat.*, 14: 1979: 157) has reported a single bird at Lake Jandakot.

This report concerns another sighting south of the Swan River, several kilometres south of Leeming, at Thompson Lake (Western Australian Wildlife Authority Reserve No. 15556). On March 3, 1979, in company with P. A. Clay, E. C. Edwards and R. Rudeforth, I saw 45+ White-backed Swallows at this locality. They were feeding over the mud flats in association with hundreds of Welcome Swallows (*Hirundo neoxena*) and a few Tree-Martins (*Petrochelidon nigricans*) perched on some dead, leafless shrubs in the mudflats. At these times, the birds were counted by all four observers.

A few White-backed Swallows were still present on March 11, by which time the lake was almost completely dry. None was seen on March 31, nor on most visits since then, with the exception of a single bird on July 22, and another on September 15, 1979.

Apparently suitable habitat for the White-backed Swallow can be found still further south on the coastal plain—it will be of interest to see if this swallow continues to extend its range in this direction, or whether the current influx is due to conditions being temporarily favourable for this species.

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